

Statement on Congressional Action on Mine Safety Legislation

June 7, 2006

I am pleased that the Congress has acted in a bipartisan way to pass important mine safety legislation. This legislation will complement the Mine Safety and Health Administration's efforts to enhance mine safety training, improve safety and communications technology, and provide emergency caches of breathable air for miners. The bill also increases penalties for those who violate mine safety laws. America's miners and their families can be confident that their Government is committed to taking measures that will help prevent accidents and save lives. I look forward to signing this bill into law.

NOTE: The statement referred to S. 2803.

Remarks on the Death of Senior Al Qaida Associate Abu Musab Al Zarqawi

June 8, 2006

Good morning. Last night in Iraq, United States military forces killed the terrorist Al Zarqawi. At 6:15 Baghdad time, special operation forces, acting on tips and intelligence from Iraqis, confirmed Zarqawi's location and delivered justice to the most wanted terrorist in Iraq.

Zarqawi was the operational commander of the terrorist movement in Iraq. He led a campaign of car bombings, assassinations, and suicide attacks that has taken the lives of many American forces and thousands of innocent Iraqis. Usama bin Laden called this Jordanian terrorist "the prince of Al Qaida in Iraq." He called on the terrorists around the world to listen to him and obey him. Zarqawi personally beheaded American hostages and other civilians in Iraq. He masterminded the destruction of the United Nations headquarters in Baghdad. He was responsible for the assassination of an American diplomat in Jordan and the bombing of a hotel in Amman.

Through his every action, he sought to defeat America and our coalition partners and turn Iraq into a safe haven from which Al

Qaida could wage its war on free nations. To achieve these ends, he worked to divide Iraqis and incite civil war. And only last week, he released an audio tape attacking Iraq's elected leaders and denouncing those advocating the end of sectarianism.

Now Zarqawi has met his end, and this violent man will never murder again. Iraqis can be justly proud of their new Government and its early steps to improve their security. And Americans can be enormously proud of the men and women of our Armed Forces, who worked tirelessly with their Iraqi counterparts to track down this brutal terrorist and to put him out of business.

The operation against Zarqawi was conducted with courage and professionalism by the finest military in the world. Coalition and Iraqi forces persevered through years of near misses and false leads, and they never gave up. Last night their persistence and determination were rewarded. On behalf of all Americans, I congratulate our troops on this remarkable achievement.

Zarqawi is dead, but the difficult and necessary mission in Iraq continues. We can expect the terrorists and insurgents to carry on without him. We can expect the sectarian violence to continue. Yet the ideology of terror has lost one of its most visible and aggressive leaders.

Zarqawi's death is a severe blow to Al Qaida. It's a victory in the global war on terror, and it is an opportunity for Iraq's new Government to turn the tide of this struggle. Two minutes ago, I spoke to Prime Minister Maliki. I congratulated him on close collaboration between coalition and Iraqi forces that helped make this day possible. Iraq's freely elected Prime Minister is determined to defeat our common enemies and bring security and the rule of law to all his people.

Earlier this morning, he announced the completion of his Cabinet appointments with the naming of a new Minister of Defense, a new Minister of the Interior, and a new Minister of State for National Security. These new ministers are part of a democratic government that represents all Iraqis. They will play a vital role as the Iraqi Government addresses its top priorities—reconciliation and reconstruction and putting an end to the kidnappings and beheadings and suicide

bombings that plague the Iraqi people. I assured Prime Minister Maliki that he will have the full support of the United States of America.

On Monday, I will meet with my national security team and other key members of my Cabinet at Camp David to discuss the way forward in Iraq. Our top diplomats and military commanders in Iraq will give me an assessment of recent changes in the political and economic and security situation on the ground. On Tuesday, Iraq's new Ambassador to the United States will join us, and we will have a teleconference discussion with the Prime Minister and members of his Cabinet. Together we will discuss how to best deploy America's resources in Iraq and achieve our shared goal of an Iraq that can govern itself, defend itself, and sustain itself.

We have tough days ahead of us in Iraq that will require the continued patience of the American people. Yet the developments of the last 24 hours give us renewed confidence in the final outcome of this struggle, the defeat of terrorism threats, and a more peaceful world for our children and grandchildren.

May God bless the Iraqi people, and may God continue to bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:31 a.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, Minister of Defense Abdel Qadir Muhammed Jassim, Minister of the Interior Jawad al-Bolani, and Minister of State for National Security Sherwan al-Waili of Iraq; Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; and Iraq's Ambassador to the U.S. Samir Shakir al-Sumaydi.

Remarks at the National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast

June 8, 2006

Thank you very much, Luis. Thanks for your introduction. Right before we came in, I said, "Luis, how's your school doing?" See, I got to first know Luis when I went into inner-city Philadelphia, and he said, "I'm starting a school." I said, "How's your school doing?" He said, "Oh, pretty good." He said, "Last year, we had 69 of the 70 graduates from our school go to college."

Luis' school is doing better than pretty good; it's doing great. And we hold out hope to some kid, you know, that it's amazing what results we can achieve in a society when you raise the bar and you say, "I have hope for you; I love you." It's amazing what our country can achieve. And so, Luis, thank you very much for your leadership, and thanks for having me here at the National Hispanic Prayer Breakfast.

I think it is fitting we come together to recognize the importance of prayer and the importance of faith. You see, Americans are a people of faith. And for millions of our citizens, prayer is a daily part of life. In prayer we give thanks for the many blessings bestowed upon us by our Creator. We're blessed with courageous young men and women willing to defend us in time of war. We're blessed with a growing economy and material prosperity. And we're blessed by the diversity and creativity of millions of Hispanic Americans who enrich our great country.

We've got plenty of blessings to give thanks for, and I'm blessed by the fact that millions of Americans, many of whom I've never seen face to face, pray for me and my family. It's one of the great blessings of America, to be President of a land of prayer. So this morning we come together to give our thanks for all our blessings, and recognize our Nation's continuing dependence on Divine Providence.

I appreciate the sponsors of this breakfast. It's an important breakfast. This is a time for us to come together in common purpose to say, we're humble enough to be on bended knee. I appreciate my friend Attorney General Al Gonzales for joining us today. It's good to see you, *mi general*. The Director of the Peace Corps, Gaddi Vasquez—thank you for coming, Gaddi. Appreciate you being here. I see Senator Brownback—I think—yes, there he is. [Laughter] I know there are other Members of the Senate and the Congress who are here. Thank you all for coming today. It's really important that you're here. And I know the participants of this breakfast are glad you're here as well. I appreciate all the pastors and community leaders who are with us here today too. Thanks for coming.